



MEMORIALS (1964, R1984, R2000, R2001, R2008, R2009)

Policy Statement

The American Society of Landscape Architects believes that commemorative memorials can enrich our cultural heritage by honoring significant events and individuals. When memorials are justified through a rigorous review and approval process for location in public spaces, great care must be taken in their design and placement since they are often held for the public trust in perpetuity. The design of sculptures, structures, fountains, and other forms of commemoration shall respect the physical and cultural environment while providing opportunity for education, celebration, or healing.

Rationale

Commemorative memorials help form a community consciousness regarding significant events and individuals. However, as communities grow, the availability of public open space often becomes limited; increasing its value towards a community's overall health and well-being. Adding commemorative memorials to public spaces should be done with careful and deliberate review, with the preservation of public open space a primary consideration, due to the likely permanence of memorials.

Well-sited and designed memorials enrich public open spaces. Public spaces can readily be diminished when they become over occupied with memorial structures and other forms of commemoration. As a part of any review and approval process for location in public open space, special attention must be given to the individual memorial's impact, as well as the cumulative consequences of including multiple memorials in a particular open space.

The Society supports the following criteria for the selection, location, and design of commemorative memorials:

1. Require that all commemorative memorials be subject to appropriate review and approval for location in any public space;
2. Ensure that the memorial's design will neither adversely encroach on, nor diminish other landscape or architectural elements nearby or relative to the space;
3. Commemorate only those persons who are widely recognized as having rendered distinguished public service or social change and memorialize only those events with a lasting historic significance; and
4. In order to provide objectivity in consideration of a subject for commemoration a certain amount of elapsed time is important. Specific conditions and sentiments will serve to determine appropriate elapsed time for local memorials, with the recognition that the US Commemorative Works Act requires that at least 25 years elapse before any federal permanent memorial is erected.

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